

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION FBO-01

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CONFIDENTIAL MOGADISCIO 1774

DEPT FOR FBO RALSON AND HOOKER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ABLD PFOR SO US

SUBJ: EMBASSY COMPOUND: CONVERSATION WITH PESIDENT

REF: MOGADISCIO 1674

1. SUMMARY: SIAD SAID HE HAD NOT RPT NOT KNOWN OF FBO PROJECT SUPERVISOR VALLEJO'S EXPULSION (THUS LEAVING A SLIM POSSIBILITY OF ITS REVERSAL). HE DECLINED TO REITERATE HIS ASSENT OF LAST JULY TO OUR PROCEEDING WITH COMPOUND, SAYING MATTER SHOULD BE PURSUED AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. WHETHER THIS A WAY OF SAYING NO TO COMPOUND OR SIMPLY OF POSTPONING DECISION CAN BEST BE DETERMINED BY OUR PURSUING MATTER WITH FONMIN, WHICH WE SHALL DO. END SUMMARY.

2. MY APPOINTMENT WITH SIAD TO DISCUSS COMPOUND AND VALLEJO WAS ONE OF SEVERAL MEETINGS PRESIDENT HAD DECEMBER 5 WITH FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES, HEADED BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR WHO HAD BEEN WAITING OVER A MONTH FOR HIS APPOINTMENT. I REVIEWED RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ON COMPOUND ALONG LINES MY TALK WITH FONMIN (REFTEL), HIGHLIGHTING SIAD'S JULY 23 STATEMENT TO CHARGE (MOGADISCIO 1092) TO EFFECT THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO SEE US PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION. I ASKED WHETHER VALLEJO EXPULSION WAS A WAY OF TELLING US THAT SIAD NO LONGER FELT WE SHOULD GO AHEAD WITH PROJECT.

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2. SIAD DETERMINEDLY AVOIDED GIVING AN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION. HE SAID HE FAVORED IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS BUT THAT WHETHER COMPLETION OF COMPOUND CONSTRUCTION WAS CONSISTENT WITH THIS WAS "TECHNICAL MATTER" ABOUT WHICH HE ILL-INFORMED. HE RECALLED THAT "SOME PEOPLE" SAID COMPOUND WAS TOO BIG AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME DISCUSSION A YEAR AND HALF AGO WITH VICE PRESIDENT CULMIE ABOUT OUR GIVING BACK PART OR ALL OF THE PROPERTY (MOGADISCIO 638 AND 547 OF APRIL/MAY 1972). NS WONDERED IF MOVING TO COMPOUND WOULD NOT INCREASE ISOLATION OF AMERICAN EMBASSY. HE ALSO SAID A RECENT LAW (PRESUMABLY THAT REFERRED TO BY FONMIN -743*53)) DEALT WITH QUESTION OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENT ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF PROPERTY AND INCLUDED SOME PROVISIONS ON RECIPROCITY. I NOTED THAT WE HAD HAD PROPERTY FOR OVER TEN YEARS AND ALREADY HAD 1.5 MILLION DOLLARS INVESTED IN IT. SIAD SUGGESTED THAT I TALK TO FONMIN AND MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. IF THIS DID NOT CLARIFY MATTER I COULD ALWAYS COME BACK TO PRESIDENT.

4. SAID SAID HE HAD NOT HEARD OF VALLEJO EXPULSION AND ASKED IF WE HAD BEEN GIVEN A REASON. I SAID WE HAD NOT, AND THAT VALLEJO HAD SPENT OVER THREE YEARS HERE WITHOUT ANY DIFFICULTIES. SIAD SAID HE KNEW WE WERE VERY SENSITIVE ABOUT EXPULSIONS AND HE TRIED TO BE FULLY INFORMED ABOUT THEM. SOMETIMES MISTAKES WERE MADE.

5. SIAD IN CONCLUSION SAID HE WOULD SPEAK TO FONMIN ABOUT VALLEJO MATTER AND COMPOUND, AND THAT I SHOULD PURSUE MATTER AT THAT LEVEL.

6. COMMENT: SIAD MAY IN FACT HAVE BEEN UNINFORMED ABOUT VALLEJO. THIS WOULD BE MOST UNUSUAL, BUT IF HE HAD KNOWN, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY EASY FOR HIM TO GIVE ME A REASON (TRUMPED UP OR NOT) FOR THE ACTION. IF HE WAS UNAWARE OF IT HE WILL DOUBTLESS INQUIRE ABOUT IT AND IT IS CONCEIVABLE (ALTHOUGH A VERY LONG SHOT) THAT THE ACTION COULD BE REVERSED.

7. SIAD WAS QUITE FIRM IN HIS RESISTANCE TO MY ATTEMPTS TO GET A GENERAL STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE FROM HIM ON COMPOUND, EVEN THOUGH I REMINDED HIM TWICE OF HIS STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE OF LAST JULY. WE KNOW THERE ARE SOME WITHIN SRC WHO DO NOT WISH TO CONFIDENTIAL

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SEE US--AND PERHAPS OTHER COUNTRIES (WE KNOW SOVIETS ARE CLOSELY FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS ON OUR COMPOUND)--HAVE SUCH A PROMINENT PHYSICAL PRESENCE IN MOGADISCIO. QUESTION FO CONTRACTOR ALI SHEIKH AND OUR TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLAR CREDIT IN SOMALI BANK MAY ALSO BE AFFECTING SIAD'S VIEWS, THOUGH HE DID NOT RPT NOT RAISE THIS MATTER AND HIS WHOLE APPROACH WAS THAT HE NOT INVOLVED WITH SUCH "DETAILS".

8. OUR ATTEMPT AT "QUICK FIX" HAS IN ANY CASE BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL.
WHETHER SIAD'S TELLING US TO DISCUSS MATTER AT LOWER LEVEL IS
WAY OF SAYING NO OR SIMPLY OF POSTPONING DECISION CAN ONLY BE
DETERMINED BY OUR PURSUING QUESTION WITHIBONMIN - UNSATISFACTORY
AS THAT CHANNEL USUALLY IS. I WILL SPEAK TO FONMIN - WHO ON
NOVEMBER 15 PROMISED ME AN ANSWER ON BOTH VALLEJO AND COMPOUND
- IN HOPE THAT MY TALK WITH PRESIDENT MAY HAVE INCREASED
CHANCES OF GETTING A MEANINGFUL RESPONSE.

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NNN

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